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Tuesday, November 28, 2006

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Published November 28, 2006

Lisa Holland gets life in prison for Ricky's death; doesn't comment on case (video/photos)

Midday update

By Kevin Grasha
Lansing State Journal

Lisa Holland was sentenced today to life in prison without parole, the mandatory punishment under Michigan law, for the death of her son.

Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield told Holland: "You buried your dog, but you threw away your child." She then told Holland she was going to spend the rest of her life in prison.

A jury on Oct. 27 convicted the 33-year-old Williamston woman of first-degree felony murder and first-degree child abuse in the death of her 7-year-old adopted son, Ricky.

Holland stood and cried softly while Manderfield spoke. She chose not to make a statement to the court.

Her husband, Tim Holland, 37, was sentenced earlier this month to 30 to 60 years in prison. He pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and testified against his wife at her trial.

Ricky was reported missing from his family's Williamston home on July 2, 2005, but testimony in the six-week trial revealed he died the previous evening. He likely succumbed to a severe head injury inflicted the preceding week.

In January of this year, Tim Holland led police to Ricky's remains, which had been dumped in a marshlike area near Dansville.

Check back at www.lsj.com for more on this story.



(Photo by BECKY SHINK / Lansing State Journal)
Lisa Holland listens during her sentencing today.

Related content from LSJ:

- [VIDEO: Lisa Holland sentenced to life in prison \(11/28/06\)](#)

Photo Gallery:

[Lisa Holland sentencing](#)

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Mother sentenced for involvement in daughter's death

Created: 11/27/2006 3:57:59 PM
Updated: 11/27/2006 4:01:05 PM

The mother of a Grand Rapids girl who died of child abuse was sentenced for her role in the death today.

The victim, 2 year old Aiyana Cisneros, died in july of 2005 in Grand Rapids. It's a crime a judge called in court Monday "profoundly sad, disturbing and horrible."

Her mother, Samantha Winkler, earlier pled guilty to 2nd degree murder. Winkler's boyfriend, Pedro Navarro, actually inflicted the fatal wounds on the child. He has not been charged. Winkler was charged with failing to intervene once she learned her boyfriend was abusing her child.

Since Winkler cooperated with authorities she was sentenced to 13 and half to 60 years in prison.

Web Editor: [Chris Fleszar](#), Managing Editor



Aiyana Cisneros



Samantha Winkler

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6-month-old in abuse case is dead

Deputies assisting social services heard of child after arriving to remove older child from Cottrellville home

By CRAIG DAVISON
Times Herald

A 6-month-old boy died Saturday following injuries from a Wednesday incident of suspected child abuse in

An autopsy will be performed on the boy, St. Clair County Sheriff Sgt. Rick Mouilleseaux said Sunday even

The St. Clair County Sheriff department did not return phone messages inquiring about the condition Saturday evening.

Detectives were not available for comment Sunday.

Sheriff deputies discovered the boy had been hospitalized Thursday afternoon when Protective Services remove two other children from the infant's home in the 800 block of

Police found the children at a home in the Shangri-La Village Homes, a trailer park in Marine City.

The baby, whose name has not been released, was transported via helicopter to a care unit at a University of Michigan Health System hospital in Ann Arbor.

Police said Friday a relative drove the baby to the hospital Wednesday with "severe injuries."

After the child was stabilized, he was flown to the Ann Arbor hospital for further treatment.

Further details about the case have not been released.

It is unknown how long the investigation will continue.

Contact Craig Davison at (810) 989-6276 or cdavison@gannett.com.

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Two Year-Old Left At Hospital Now In Foster Care

Nov 27, 2006 05:25 PM EST

(TV5) -- A 2 1/2 year-old girl who was beaten, burned and dropped off at a Flint hospital is now out of a coma, and in foster care.

The Genesee County Prosecutor announced little Gina had at least 47 different injuries when mother Jessica Lake and her boyfriend dropped the girl off at the hospital about 3 weeks ago.

And while she's out of the hospital she's not out of the woods. "While some of her physical abilities are there we suspect she has severe emotional issues that will have to be dealt with over a long period of time, and we also suspect there will be further medical treatment necessary," said Genesee County Prosecutor David Layton.

If you would like to help Citizens Bank has set up a fund, donations are being accepted at any branch by asking to donate to the Angel Fund for Gina.



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Published November 26, 2006

Discussing tragedy with kids

By WILL WHELTON
Editor

WILLIAMSTON — Area parents faced a difficult dilemma in July, 2005: How to explain Ricky Holland's disappearance from his parents' home.

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When Tim and Lisa Holland were charged in his murder earlier this year, parents faced a more difficult dilemma: How to explain why parents would hurt their own child.

Even if parents do their best to shield their children from the news involving Ricky Holland's murder, chances are children will learn about at least part of the investigation and trial.

Local experts say what — and how much — to tell a child depends on their development level.

"I think it's always best to be honest," said Sarah Rockstead, program director at Ele's Place. "Parents might want to be proactive in bringing it up, depending on the age of the child. I think a parent wants to communicate that anything can be talked about."

Rockstead said it is important for parents to not minimize a child's concern.

"While we, as adults, might realize this is a fairly rare situation, to a child it might make perfect sense to wonder, 'What does it mean?'" she said. "Take children's questions seriously and honestly answer them."

According to Rockstead, parents should be aware of any changes in a child's behavior which could signal anxiety or worry. She said changes could take any form, depending on the child.

"Children show their feelings through their behavior, and often their feelings are much more likely to come out through behavior than through talking," she said.

"If parents tune into them and are sensitive to any changes in a child's behavior, give them some extra reassurance and see if the child will talk at all about what is bothering them."

Rockstead teenagers can be especially challenged by the news of parents harming a child. She said such cases can reinforce a teen's cynicism and mistrust about adults.

"They don't have the coping skills they will eventually have as adults," she said. "They feel they're too grown up to ask for help, but they don't always have those support systems in place."

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Walk for Warmth sets disbursement guidelines (Soo Evening News)

SAULT STE. MARIE - The Chippewa County Walk for Warmth "Oversight Committee" met to establish the disbursement guidelines for this year's funds. To date, the Walk for Warmth has raised more than \$20,000 with which to provide emergency assistance to residents for home heating and other related needs.

The funds will be available beginning on Dec. 1, after the group has had an opportunity to get the program organized for state matching funds purposes. In the meantime, households experiencing emergency needs should start by contacting the local Department of Human Services. After that date, applications for the local Walk for Warmth assistance can be completed at the Community Action Agency in the Avery Center, according to a news release.

The following general guidelines will apply:

- This program is designed as a last resort for assistance when all other sources of assistance and/or programs cannot be accessed due to lack of funds or eligibility requirements that cannot be met by the applicant.
- A "Decision Notice" is required from other sources of assistance documenting that the household is not eligible for assistance at that time, or funding assistance is not available. In some cases, this can be determined through direct contact (telephone/fax) with the other assistance providers.
- Income - Any household facing an emergency is welcome to apply, providing they meet all other program guidelines.
- The household receiving assistance will be encouraged to, at the very least, participate in the Walk for Warmth as a walker, and solicit pledges, for the following year's Walk for Warmth.
- Households may apply for assistance more than one time. However, those who have not been helped before will receive priority.

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Published November 28, 2006
[From Lansing State Journal]

Local news briefs

Girl, 15, remains in critical condition

MASON - A 15-year-old Mason girl remained in critical condition Monday at Sparrow Hospital after she was injured in a car crash, Michigan state police said.

Paul Dunsmore, 20, was arraigned Sunday on a charge of drunken driving causing serious injury in the crash that occurred Friday night on Interstate 96 near U.S. 127. The Morrice man is jailed on \$100,000 bond.

A 41-year-old Mason man and his three teenagers were in the other vehicle. The man and two of his children were treated and released, while his daughter remains hospitalized. Police would not release her name because of the ongoing investigation and because she is a minor.

Dunsmore's preliminary hearing, which will determine whether the case advances to trial, is set for 2 p.m. Dec. 5.

Police: Crash-related deaths down

Fewer people died in traffic crashes over the holiday weekend this year compared with last year, Michigan State Police said Monday.

Fifteen people died in 13 crashes this Thanksgiving weekend, which ran from 6 p.m. Wednesday through midnight Sunday, according to preliminary reports.

Five of the 15 victims were known to have been wearing seat belts and alcohol was known to be a factor in five of the fatal crashes, police said.

In 2005, 19 people died in traffic crashes over the Thanksgiving weekend.

Priest returns from peace work trip

After protecting Palestinian homes in Gaza from Israeli bombings for about five days, a priest and nun have returned home to Michigan.

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"It was a powerful experience," the Rev. Peter Dougherty said.

Dougherty and Sister Mary Ellen Gondeck of the Lansing-based Michigan Peace Team joined hundreds of Palestinians in volunteering as human shields to deter Israelis from bombing the homes of two militants.

Dougherty and Gondeck were doing peace work in Jerusalem when they heard news that the houses were targeted. They went to Gaza and accompanied those shielding the houses, sitting with the people and holding their infants.

"One man called me his brother and kissed me and hugged me because he was so grateful we were there to help him," he said.

As many as 40 people live in each of the houses, which were not bombed, Dougherty said.

Program to focus on Alzheimer's

ST. JOHNS - The Alzheimer's Association, in conjunction with the Clinton County Department of Human Services, is offering "Answers on Alzheimer's," a free consultation program.

Families and dementia care professionals can meet one-on-one with a representative from the Alzheimer's Association to discuss questions related to memory loss and caregiving concerns. Meetings will be held from noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 5 at the Clinton County Department of Human Services, 201 W. Railroad St.

One-hour appointments are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. All meetings are free and confidential.

For more information, contact the Alzheimer's Association, Michigan Great Lakes Chapter at (800) 272-3900 or 364-7590. To schedule an appointment, call (989) 224-5537.

Club patron shoots 2 Detroit bouncers

DETROIT - Two bouncers at a downtown nightclub were shot and wounded early Monday morning, police said.

Police said an angry patron of the Good Life Lounge returned to the club at about 3 a.m. with a handgun after having been tossed out earlier in the evening. The man opened fire on the bouncers, wounding one critically. Police said about two dozen shots were fired in the incident.

One man, 34, was in serious condition. The second man, 33, was in critical condition. Police were looking for the shooter Monday night.

Earlier this year during Super Bowl festivities, a 24-year-old Detroit woman was shot and killed outside of the Good Life Lounge.

Kyle Smith was shot and killed at 1:30 a.m. on Feb. 4, while waiting outside the nightclub on Woodward, near Congress. No arrests have been made in the case.

Monday's shooting came after an especially violent weekend for Detroit; officers shot three people - killing two - in unrelated incidents that appear to have been self-defense, police said.

- From staff and wire reports



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Published November 26, 2006

Eaton County's 'Great Start' awarded \$120 K

CHARLOTTE — The Eaton County Great Start Collaborative accepted a \$120,000 grant from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) to strengthen early childhood development and care in Eaton County.

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ECIC Chief Executive Officer Judy Samelson and Department of Human Services Director Marianne Udow presented a ceremonial check to Al Widner, Eaton Intermediate School District Superintendent.

The grant is part of a \$3.15 million award to 21 Great Start Collaboratives across Michigan that coordinate community resources and supports to help children from birth to age five and their families. A total of 70 percent of Michigan's poor and minority children now live in a county where a Great Start Collaborative is being convened.

The Early Childhood Investment Corporation, announced in Governor Jennifer Granholm's 2005 State of the State address, provides grants from a mix of public and private funding sources. Grand funding was made possible in August when the Michigan legislature approved a \$1 million appropriation for early childhood collaboratives across the state. This appropriation triggered matching funds from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Fourteen other state collaboratives were funded earlier this year by the Department of Human Services.

"These grants will help bring together the public and private sectors including government, business, civic, faith, education and community groups to develop a long-standing, sustained focus on early learning and childhood development," Samelson said. "We're grateful for the support of our partners who recognize the importance of investing in early childhood programs."

Intermediate school districts will act as fiduciaries for the grants. In addition to Eaton Intermediate School District, 21 other intermediate school districts and regional educational service areas around the state also were awarded funding for planning and/or implementation of Great State Collaboratives.

"Children who participate in high-quality early childhood development programs are better prepared to enter elementary school, are more likely to pursue secondary education and to have lower dropout rates and higher high school graduation rates," said Udow. "By improving the skills of a large fraction of the workforce, these programs for poor children will reduce poverty and strengthen the state's ability to compete in the global market."

ECIC is a unique public, nonprofit corporation created to invest in Michigan's youngest citizens. By educating, motivating and involving Michigan citizens in efforts to build and promote a system of supports for young children and their families, all Michigan children can make a Great Start!

For more information, visit www.ecic4kids.org.

— *From Early Childhood Investment Corporation.*

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Paw Paw FLASHES

PAW PAW, MI
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11/27/2006

Adoption Completes a Family

By: Paul Garrod



PAW PAW - Wanting to start over with a good family, 17-year-old Ryan Joseph Thompson said at his adoption hearing this week, "I'm tired of being shuffled around."

That shuffling came to a happy ending Tuesday morning at the Van Buren County Courthouse during an adoption hearing before Judge Frank Willis.

Ryan was formally adopted by his uncle, Cherokee Thompson of Breedsville.

When asked by Willis why he consented to the adoption, the younger Thompson said, "for the feeling of wanting to be with a family and not being shuffled around anymore. I want to be with a family that actually wants me and actually cares for me."

Ryan had spent a number of years in the system, and Cherokee was not aware that Ryan was up for adoption until his fiancée, Lori Skelton, happened to come across Ryan's picture on the MARE Web site. The two then contacted Julie Beckett, a child welfare worker at the Van Buren County Department of Human Services, who then started the adoption process.

Beckett attended the hearing, and when asked by Willis if she thought the adoption was a good idea, she replied, "absolutely. Ryan is a very mature young man. I really respect him because he didn't give up. A lot of kids that I work with that are teenagers say, 'You know what? I'm not going to put my neck out on the line. I'm not going to take that risk to see if there's a family out there that wants me. But Ryan never gave up.'"

She continued, "He's a good kid. I think they have a lot of fun together, and I have seen his self-confidence increase and his self-image improve."

Cherokee said, "Ryan has been a blessing to us, too. He's a young man that got caught up in the system, again. It was not his fault. Am I ashamed of my little sister? Yeah, very ashamed. But do I still love her? Yeah, she's made mistakes. Drugs destroy a lot of good families. He's a product of that."

Marking his first year on the Bangor varsity football team, Thompson received the team award for courage.

"He didn't get to start, but he stayed in there. (He) got knocked by the bigger boys and got up every time and pushed back. At the end of the season, he was pushing the bigger boys around," said the elder Thompson.

In addition to playing football, Ryan is also working parttime at Harding's Market in Bangor.

"He carried the grades, with working and playing football. That shows me a lot, a lot of character and a humble being," said Cherokee. "I'm proud of him and he's going to make an excellent son....we love him a lot. He fits in there like he's always been there, and that's amazing.... I'm glad to have him for a son. It's going to be a long, lasting relationship."

Ryan's new sister, Amie Kenyon, who also attended the ceremony, said, "I've always wanted a brother, so I am really excited."

Willis said to Ryan, "You came from a really tough life. You had to go through a lot of obstacles. You stand from a position of strength in the sense that you are going to be in a position to be tempted by drugs. People are going to try and get you to take those. You can say, 'I've seen what they've done. I'll tell you what they have done.'"

He concluded, "I believe God didn't give up on you. He realized what a fine young man you were, and realized he wanted to find a home for you that would be perfect for you."

Willis added with a chuckle, "I'm not saying that everything is going to be roses. You're going to have times when you're not going to like your uncle too well."

Following the adoption, the the family plans to visit New Orleans, then take a five-day Caribbean cruise, visiting Cozumel and Costa Maya.

The event marked Michigan Adoption Day, co-sponsored by the Michigan Adoption Re-sources, the Michigan Supreme Court and the Michigan Department of Human Services.

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Published November 28, 2006

Families see cadet success: ChalleNGe kids demonstrate new skills while home

By Susan Vela
Lansing State Journal

DEWITT - A new Mike Parish returned home from the Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy, the state's one-of-a-kind paramilitary school.

This Mike didn't sass off to his parents and didn't hang out with bad influences.

He picked up after himself, impressed the relatives at Thanksgiving and talked about finding a good job and going to college.

"We dropped him off as a young kid; we picked him up as a young man," Mike's father, Dave Parish, said.

During a four-day break, 91 cadets had time to think about where their lives were heading before they volunteered for the National Guard academy's strict five-month course of physical exercise, book work, vocational training and community service.

They resisted the old temptations that initially compelled them to consider the academy as a last resort.

"It's not worth putting myself in a position where I could make a mistake," said 17-year-old Mike, who refrained from searching for his former buddies while home. "I just want to work hard to



(Photo by Rod Sanford/Lansing State Journal)
Family time: Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy cadet Mike Parish, 17, is the "monkey in the middle" as he plays with his second cousins Brad Aikin (left), 5, and Mandle Aikin, 9, on Thanksgiving Day during a family get-together.

HOW MANY WILL SURVIVE?

- July 9: Day One of Pre-ChalleNGe, 146 of 155 accepted candidates initially reported for duty. Later, five standby candidates arrived.
- July 24: Academics officially start with 110 cadets.
- Mid-September: 96 cadets
- Sunday, after a four-day break: 91

ABOUT THE SERIES

- The Lansing State Journal is spending time with the Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy's 15th class to learn how they fared in traditional schools and why they're opting for a military academy that tests them academically, physically, mentally and emotionally.

Photo Gallery:

[Youth ChalleNGe \(11/24/06\)](#)

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get an education, to have a good life."

With only two weeks to go before graduation, all 91 cadets returned Sunday to the academy's living quarters in Battle Creek.

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Hugs, kisses goodbye

Drill sergeants were there to greet them, and no one was more welcoming than Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Send.

He hailed Mike: "Decided to come back, huh, Parish?"

The teen responded with military vigor: "Yes, sir!"

Send wasn't through.

"That's good," he said. "You only have two weeks left. Say your goodbyes."

Some cadets cried upon returning from a few days of freedom. Their parents didn't make it any easier.

Suzanne Farmer of St. Clair Shores grabbed her already weepy daughter, Danielle, for a hug.

"I love you, honey," the mother said.

Farmer gave Danielle an ultimatum earlier this year: Either enroll at the academy, which provides a military setting for at-risk kids still wanting a high school diploma or its equivalent, or go to a more unpleasant facility for a greater amount of time.

The teen picked the academy. Since initially arriving on its campus, her career aspirations have switched from cosmetology to nursing. And soon she'll be taking classes at Dorsey Business School.

Despite her progress, Danielle never made it home over break. Her mother didn't want to risk the consequences. So the family spent Thanksgiving in rural west Michigan, far from Danielle's old vices, which included partying all night.

"She's crying," Farmer said after leaving her daughter Sunday. "But ... she'll never forget this place. The bad memories will fade."

Danielle, 17, was nervous while waiting for other cadets to return. The dynamics at the academy can change so quickly. If one cadet drops out "Even if we only have (two weeks) left, ... I'm still kind of scared," she said.

Hello, remember me?

With the Dec. 9 graduation ceremony so near, Henry Strachan, 17, of Perry relaxed in his family's new home over break. He concentrated on rebuilding relationships since "I've been away from family so much."

So Henry was a little nerve-wracked Sunday when he returned to the place where he's been living since July. There, he discovered 1st Sgt. Lyle Forcia screaming at a cadet who returned without wearing the proper uniform. The cadet was on the ground, obeying orders to do pushups.

"So you think the rules are different because you've enlisted?" Forcia yelled. "We just bring all sorts of trash back into the house."

Henry won't let anyone's screw-ups get in his way.

"My plan is to graduate and make my parents proud," he said.

He plans to enroll at Lansing Community College, Michigan State University and eventually law school.

So much has changed

On Sunday, Patrick Yonker, 17, of Alto, didn't want to let go of his younger sister, Cassandra, 2. She grew so much while he was away at the academy.

"She can talk like I can't believe," he said, trying to stop the tears when his family departed.

A job and college studies will follow graduation. Patrick also has joined the National Guard.

However, until he's back in Alto, drills, school work, award ceremonies and standardized tests to attain the equivalent of a high school diploma will consume his calendar.

Patrick summed up his strategy to survive the rest of the academy: "Giving 100 percent."

As they departed, parents acknowledged that a lot will depend on them. What they discovered over break was that their teens have come to rely on the academy's structure.

"I'm going to always have something for him to do," said Earsel Montgomery of South Bend, Ind.

As an academy graduate, Brandon Montgomery probably will work at the same company as his father. He's also taking business administration courses at a nearby community college.

A few more days

Meanwhile, it could be a long trek to prosperity for Simon Fogg. He was stealing "golf clubs, a BMX bike, all kinds of stuff" before the academy.

Without the academy, "I'd probably be in jail," Fogg, 16, said over break, while caring for the horses on his guardian's Belle-vue property.

Now, he has a chance to succeed. He'll likely join the National Guard in the next few months. He'll also train for a trade, such as welding.

Simon was one of the last cadets to return to Battle Creek on Sunday evening.

He stood proudly, with shoulders back, as the cadets have been taught to do.



KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

WANTED

Monday, November 27, 2006

The following people are being sought by local authorities:

Daniel James Donahoe, 55, is wanted on a probation violation stemming from a charge of uttering and publishing (writing a bad check). He is 5 feet 8 inches tall, weighs 150 pounds and has gray hair and blue eyes. He may be staying in the 6400 block of North 12th Street in Kalamazoo.

Antonio Maurice King, 23, is wanted on a probation violation stemming from a charge of unlawfully driving away a motor vehicle and for assaulting/resisting/obstructing a police officer. He is 5 feet 9 inches tall, weighs 140 pounds and has black hair, brown eyes and a slight mustache. He has a tattoo of a cross with "NEE NEE" written on it on his right shoulder. He may be staying in the 2200 block of Flower Street in Kalamazoo.

Bredget Marie Tiller, 39, is wanted for failing to appear in court on a charge of possession of less than 25 grams of a controlled substance and for failing to appear in court on a charge of using a controlled substance. She is 5 feet 5 inches tall, weighs 120 pounds and has blond hair and hazel eyes. She may be staying in the 5400 block of Deadwood Drive in Portage or in the 1800 block of Stockbridge Avenue in Kalamazoo.

Daniel Lee-Carrick VanAnt-werp, 22, also known as Daniel Carrick VanAntwerp, is wanted on a probation violation stemming from a charge of entering without breaking and for a charge of nonpayment of child support. He is 5 feet 9 inches tall, weighs 140 pounds and has brown hair and hazel eyes. He has a tattoo of the astrological sign Gemini on his right arm, a tattoo of a four-leaf clover on his left arm, a tattoo of "NICHOLAS" on his right forearm and a tattoo of "CHLOE FAY" on his left forearm. He may be staying in the 4500 block of Gull Prairie Drive or in the 3400 block of Maple Street, both in Kalamazoo.

Anyone with information about these people is asked to call Silent Observer at 343-2100 or the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department at 343-2100.

– Compiled by Lynn Turner

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JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING



MARIANNE UDOW
DIRECTOR

News Release

Contact: Maureen Sorbet or Karen Stock (517) 373-7394

National Governors Association highlights Michigan efforts to aid aging out foster youths

November 28, 2006

Michigan's progress in helping foster youths aging out of care will get national exposure at the second meeting of the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices Policy Academy Nov. 28-30 in Miami, FL.

Department of Human Services Director Marianne Udow will outline key challenges, innovative efforts underway and progress steps that Michigan has taken from its report on the "Interdepartmental Task Force on Services to At Risk Youth Transitioning to Adulthood" released in October. The report includes 21 action steps to ease foster youths' transition to independence when they age out of foster care at 18 years of age.

"We have taken some important steps in implementing our plans," Udow said, "but there is more to do and we hope our work inspires other states and other organizations to join our efforts to help these young people on the road to self sufficiency."

In May 2006, Michigan was one of six states selected to participate in the NGA Best Practices Policy Academy. Michigan policymakers worked with national experts to design and implement new policies and programs for youth aging out of foster care at the first meeting.

States participating in the academy will be represented by a core team, appointed by the governor and comprised of senior state leaders who are in a position to develop and implement substantial changes in policies and practices. The 45-member Michigan task force, co-chaired by Udow and Supreme Court Justice Maura Corrigan, delivered its report to the Michigan Legislature in October 2006.

In Michigan, about 450 youths aged out of foster care during 2005. These young adults are at greater risk for poverty, homelessness, unemployment and other negative outcomes. The Michigan task force examined various challenges for foster care youths and included recommendations from foster youths with firsthand experience on the panel.

"There is a growing awareness among our state and community partners that it is a myth to assume a child of 18 is ready for independence," Udow said.

For more information on foster care and a complete copy of the report, go to
www.michigan.gov/dhs

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